

WILL STUDENTS WATCH PHYSCASTS IF THEY ARE NOT ASSESSED?

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Abstract

We introduce PhysCasts – short screencasts with audio narration that each explain a particular concept from the first year Physics unit Energy and Motion. These videos were produced to provide conceptual understanding and demonstrate problem solving by example to complement a peer-instruction approach in the classroom.

In this paper, we investigate whether students enrolled in a first year physics unit will watch these videos, even though they are not linked to assessment, and how those who do watch them perform in the first year unit. We find that PhysCasts have been very popular at Swinburne University of Technology, with students commenting on their usefulness on official teaching evaluation surveys, and watching them at a much higher rate (100 times higher) than lecture recordings. They are also integral to more recent blended learning approaches taken in teaching physics at Swinburne.

We have released 80 PhysCasts online as open educational resources, and are encouraging others to use our resources.

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